

Message Text

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TAGS: TBIO, UR, US

SUBJECT: US-USSR HEALTH AGREEMENT--JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING (03.00):

SCI COUNSELOR CALLS ON VENEDIKTOV -- SUMMARY OF MEMCON

REF: (A) MOSCOW 13069, (B) MOSCOW 12955, (C) MOSCOW 12616,
(D) STATE 197289

SUMMARY: SCI COUNSELOR AUGUST 24 CALLED ON DR. VENEDIKTOV, DEPUTY MINISTER, USSR MINISTRY OF HEALTH, TO DELIVER HEW/NIH PUBLICATIONS ON GUIDELINES FOR RECOMBINANT DNA RESEARCH AND TO DISCUSS THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING TO BE HELD OCTOBER 25-29 IN MOSCOW. ALSO PRESENT AT THE MEETING IN VENEDIKTOV'S OFFICE WERE DOCTRS BALABOLKIN, MESHKOVSKIY AND MALYSHEV, ALL FROM THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH. MR. HUGHES, FROM THE SCI OFFICE, ACCOMPANIED DR. LOEBNER. END SUMMARY.

1. LOEBNER PRESENTED NIH PUBLICATIONS PROVIDING GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH IN RECOMBINANT DNA (REF B) AND STRESSED SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH GUIDELINES ARE VIEWED IN U.S. LOEBNER EXPLAINED THAT THE GUIDELINES AVOIDED, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, INTERFERING WITH RESEARCH, BUT WERE DESIGNED TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT. HE ASKED VENEDIKTOV WHAT THE STATUS OF RECOMBINANT DNA RESEARCH IS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND WHAT PRECAUTIONS ARE BEING TAKEN. LOEBNER POINTED OUT THE PASSAGES IN THE NIH GUIDELINES WHICH EX-
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PRESS THE HOPE THAT ALL COUNTRIES WILL ADOPT PRECAUTIONARY

MEASURES SIMILAR TO THOSE BEING ADOPTED IN THE UNITED STATES.

2. VENEDIKTOV EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THE NIH GUIDELINES AND LOEBNER'S EXPLANATION OF THE CONTENTS. VENEDIKTOV SAID THE PROBLEMS AND DANGERS OF RECOMBINANT DNA RESEARCH ARE BING STUDIES IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT THE USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THE MEDICAL ACADEMY WERE INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY. HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE THE NIH GUIDELINES TRANSLATED AND DISTRIBUTED, BUT SUGGESTED FURTHER DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES IN ENGLISH ONCE THEY ARE RECEIVED BY THE EMBASSY (ADDITIONAL COPIES REQUESTED REF B).

3. VENEDIKTOV SAID HE WOULD INFORM THE SCI OFFICE IN THIS EMBASSY OF THE STATUS OF SOVIET RESEARCH IN RECOMBINANT DNA AND THE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES BEING TAKEN.

4. VENEDIKTOV BEGAN A DISCUSSION OF THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED OVER THE YEARS SINCE THE FIRST JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING UNDER THE MEDICAL SCIENCE AGREEMENT. AFTER CHARACTERIZING EACH SUCCESSIVE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING AS A STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS, HE SAID THE WORK BEING DONE UNDER THE AGREEMENT HAS REACHED THE ADVANCED STAGE WHERE THE COOPERATION IS SO CLOSE THAT THERE WOULD BE STRONG OBJECTIONS ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET AND U.S. PARTICIPANTS IN THE AGREEMENT TO ANY SUGGESTION TO TERMINATE THE COOPERATION.

5. VENEDIKTOV REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF STANDARDIZING METHODOLOGY. HE SAID MUCH HAS BEEN DONE ALONG THESE LINES, BUT MUCH MORE MUST BE DONE TO ACHIEVE CONCRETE RESULTS FROM MEDICAL COOPERATION. THE FIFTH JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING, HE SAID, MUST DEAL WITH SUBSTANCE AND LARGER PROGRAMS, AND NOT BE "JUST NOISE IN THE PRESS."

6. VENEDITKOV SAID THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD HAVE AN INTERESTING PROGRAM FOR THE U.S. JOUNT COMMITTEE MEMBERS DURING THEIR OCTOBER VISIT TO MOSCOW. THE PROGRAM WOULD INCLUDE VISITS TO LABORATORIES.

7. DR. LOEBNER FOLLOWED BY MAKING AN UNOFFICIAL INQUIRY ABOUT THE INTEREST OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IN CONSIDERING A POSSIBLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JOINT PROJECT THAT WOULD COMBINE MANY DISCIPLINES IN ATTEMPTING TO SOLVE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO VARYING DEGREES OF HEARING LOSS IN MAN. DR. LOEBNER SAID THAT DR. STEVER HAD RECENTLY INFORMED HIM BY LETTER THAT THIS PROJECT SUGGESTION HAD BEEN PASSED TO DR. FISCHER.

8. AFTER DISCUSSING THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO SUCH A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROJECT, VENEDIKTOV AGREED TO

HAVE SOVIET EXPERTS EXAMINE THE QUESTION AND SAID "IT WILL BE BETTER TO BEGIN WITH AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION."

9. COMMENT: VENEDIKTOV'S DESCRIPTION OF PAST JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND THE SOVIET EXPECTATIONS FOR FIFTH MEETING WAS A REHEARSED PERFORMANCE. THE MESSAGE CAME THROUGH CLEARLY-- STANDARDIZATION OF METHOLDODOGY AND SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAMS ARE THE SOVIET GOALS FOR FUTURE COOPERATION. VENEDIKTOV'S SUGGESTION THAT ANY INTERRUPTION IN COPERATION WOULD BE OBJECTED TO BY PARTICIPANTS ON BOTH SIDES SMACKED OF "THE IRREVERSABILITY OF DETENTE" ARGUMENT. END COMMENT.
STOESSEL

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